

a few thousand soldiers across the icy waters in the midst of a driving snowstorm. Most generals would not have taken such a risk. But the commitment of Washington and his men was absolute. They headed into battle with a bold password, "Victory or death."

In a matter of hours, victory was theirs. Morale immediately improved. And the American people began to believe that our Nation possessed the perseverance and courage to protect our liberty. The turnaround that began that night would end with the United States' triumph in the American Revolution and the permanent establishment of a free nation.

Two hundred and thirty-two years have passed since George Washington crossed the Delaware. But on this Christmas, his legacy lives on in the men and women of the United States military. Some of them are spending this holiday helping defend emerging democracies like Iraq and Afghanistan. Others are spending it in lands where we defeated tyranny long ago, such as Germany or Japan. And some of them are spending it stateside, recovering in places like Bethesda National Naval Medical Center or Walter Reed.

Regardless of where they are, our men and women in uniform and the families who support them remind us of a clear lesson: Defending freedom is a full-time job. Our enemies do not take holidays. So the members of our Armed Forces stand ready to protect our freedom at any hour. For their service, they have the thanks of a grateful nation, this Christmas and always.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on December 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 2008

December 24, 2008

I send greetings to those observing Kwanzaa.

Kwanzaa is the celebration of African culture, community, and family traditions. For more than 40 years, millions of people have come together to reaffirm Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa. These principles emphasize unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

As people across our country gather to commemorate this seven-day celebration, may we all be reminded that Kwanzaa is an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions of our African American citizens.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a joyous Kwanzaa.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

December 20

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 22

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush visited Pathways to Housing DC.

In the afternoon, the President visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he met with wounded military personnel and their families and presented seven Purple Heart medals.

December 23

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in a bill signing ceremony for H.R. 7311, the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

December 24

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had several Christmas holiday telephone conversations with members of the U.S. military.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carol Ann Bartz, Maria Cino, and Israel Hernandez as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jennifer E. Sims as a member of the Public Interest Declassification Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mark Sanford as a member of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kevin R. Johnson and Kay Sears as members of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint John M. Hart as a member of the National Capital Planning Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Geoffrey L. Haskett and Charles J. Johnson as Commissioners of the U.S. Section of the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Sander R. Gerber; Charles E. Cobb; Carlos M. Gutierrez; and Barry Jackson.

The President announced his intention to appoint Barbara Bruin, Mark A. Carter, and Grace Flores Hughes as members of the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

The President announced his intention to appoint Nancy Goodman Brinker, Condoleezza Rice, and Leonard Sands as members of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board: Jean Loretta Becker; Gary R. Edson; Anita B. McBride; and James L. Oblinger.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released December 21

Statement by the Press Secretary on a New York Times article concerning the housing and financial crises

Released December 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Released December 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President receiving a report from the Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman and the Director General of Russia's Rosatom State Nuclear Corporation Sergey Kiryenko announcing the completion of nuclear weapons material security upgrades under the Bratislava Initiative

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 6184, H.R. 7327, S. 3663, and S. 3712

Released December 24

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's direction to review one of the Presidential pardons issued on December 23